

Culturally Appropriate Career Counseling With Gay and Lesbian Clients

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This article details the current knowledge regarding the provision of culturally appropriate career services to gay and lesbian clients. It is divided into 5 parts: history and context for the delivery of career counseling services to gay and lesbian clients, counselor self-preparation for working with gay and lesbian clients, client-focused interventions useful for counseling with gay and lesbian clients, program-focused interventions useful for addressing the special issues that this group presents, and appropriate advocacy or social action interventions. Issues of multiple cultural identities and the intersection of lesbian and gay issues with race and ethnicity are also addressed.

Providing effective and culturally appropriate career counseling to gay and lesbian clients may appear, at first glance, to be largely the same as helping nongay or nonlesbian clients identify and pursue their career goals. Even in the literature on career counseling with lesbian and gay persons published prior to 1990, few articles identified any special interventions that were different from the career counseling practice with majority culture individuals. Since 1990, however, a substantial body of literature has been published that addresses career counseling with lesbian and gay persons (Pope, 1995c), but very little of the past or recent career counseling literature regarding gay men and lesbian women has addressed the issues of nondominant racial or ethnic groups (Chung & Katayama, 1998; Pope & Chung, 2000). Furthermore, as there has not been a concomi-

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tant increase in articles published on the career development of people who identify as bisexual, transgender, intersex, or questioning, this article focuses exclusively on the provision of career counseling services to gay and lesbian clients.

The purpose of this article is to detail the current knowledge regarding the provision of culturally appropriate career services to gay and lesbian clients. It is divided into five parts: history and context, counselor self-preparation for working with gay and lesbian clients, client-focused interventions useful for counseling with gay and lesbian clients, program-focused interventions useful for addressing the special issues that this group presents, and appropriate advocacy or social action interventions. Issues of multiple cultural identities and the intersection of lesbian and gay issues with race and ethnicity are also addressed.

History and Context

In the past several years, the emergence of an identifiable lesbian and gay culture in most medium-to-large metropolitan areas in the United States has dispelled the long-held negative stereotypes of gay men as effeminate and lesbian women as overly masculine (Barret & Logan, 2001; Pope, 1995c; Pope & Barret, 2002). Prior to that, if gay men and lesbian women did not live in large cities such as New York, San Francisco, and Boston, where vital lesbian and gay culture thrives, gay men and lesbian women generally kept their sexual orientation a closely guarded secret on the job. Many of them fabricated social lives that included dates with persons of the opposite sex, and they rarely shared their vacation photographs with their coworkers. If there was a social event with coworkers, many would bring opposite sex dates that had been secured to help cover their secret. Some even chose careers on the basis of their safety in the event they decided to come out. For example, it was not unusual to hear young gay men or lesbian women speak of avoiding careers that involved working with children or comment on conservative corporations that would not deal with their sexual orientation easily. Others carefully guarded their sexual orientation for fear that the promotions would be denied them if they were more "out." Fortunately today, for many lesbian and gay clients, much of this is changing, and it is not unusual to hear casual conversations about the social and relationship aspects of gay and lesbian coworkers in the workplace. That, too, suggests that the special career needs of gay men and lesbian women are rapidly changing.

In spite of this increased visibility and acceptance—and just as African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans continue to experience job discrimination (Bowman, 1993)—gay men and lesbian women continue to experience difficulty in the workplace (Adams, 1997; Anastas, 1998; Diamant, 1993; Kirby, 2002). The failure to pass laws such as the Employment Nondiscrimination Act by the U.S. Congress attests to the lack of acceptance of the needs of gay men and lesbian women in the workplace. However, major changes are nevertheless occurring in the workplace, and gay and lesbian professionals appear to have entered a new rather contradictory era in which their sexual orientation may or may not be an issue there (Adams, 1997; Anastas, 1998; Diamant, 1993; Ellis & Riggle, 1996; Kirby, 2002; Lee & Brown,

1993; Schneider, 1987). Many national corporations are now, for example, including sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination personnel policies, and many are providing domestic partner benefits (Human Rights Campaign, 2003). Noteworthy is that in 1995 there were only 90 state and local governments that provided domestic partner benefits to their gay and lesbian employees (Pope, 1995c), whereas in 2003, there were 172 state and local governments that provided these benefits (Human Rights Campaign, 2003), with 2,326 different employers including sexual orientation in their nondiscrimination policies and 5,815 offering domestic partner benefits.

Unfortunately, discrimination continues to exist. In spite of the fact that professional athletes like Martina Navratilova (tennis) and Greg Louganis (diving) have come out, most other gay and lesbian sports figures, like most stage and screen actors, keep their sexual orientation a closely guarded secret. Further, going to work for a religious organization or even some government agencies can pose risks for gay and lesbian clients. Given the negative notion of the so-called gay and lesbian lifestyle promoted by more conservative political and religious organizations, being out in such workplaces can result in significant stress. In addition, dual-career gay and lesbian couples face particular challenges when one partner is offered a promotion that demands a move to another city; formerly married gay men and lesbian women who have children may also experience difficulties when faced with a job choice that involves moving. Also noteworthy are the kinds of tension that result when one partner is more out than the other, a situation that can quickly make the workplace more complicated (Croteau & Thiel, 1993; Milburn, 1993; Pope, 1996).

Less than 10 years ago, little research addressed career counseling with lesbian and gay clients (Chojnacki & Gelberg, 1994; Croteau & Thiel, 1993; Etringer, Hillerbrand, & Hetherington, 1990; Lonborg & Phillips, 1996; Pope 1995a). This lack of professional information paralleled the general lack of published research about all sexual minorities (Bowman, 1993; Phillips, Strohner, Berthaume, & O'Leary, 1983; Pope, 1995c). As attention to the unique needs of gay and lesbian persons has expanded, a similar trend can be identified within the career development field. The movement toward change began with a seminal event in the history of career counseling (Pope, 1995a, 1995b). A panel of career development researchers reviewed the existing knowledge on lesbian and gay career counseling, identified concrete recommendations for what research remained to be done, and presented their findings at the 1994 annual conference of the National Career Development Association (NCDA) in Albuquerque, New Mexico (Chung, 1995; Fassinger, 1995; Pope, 1995a; Prince, 1995). The findings of that panel were later published as a special section of *The Career Development Quarterly* (Pope, 1995b). These four presentations laid the groundwork for future researchers and established the beginnings of a coherent literature in lesbian and gay career development.

That panel presentation led to a boom in research on this important topic. For example, Croteau and Bieschke (1996) developed a special issue of the *Journal of Vocational Behavior* that made extensive use of the materials presented at the 1994 NCDA conference panel and in *The Career Development Quarterly* special section. The American Counseling Association published a how-to book (Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1996) on

career counseling with gay and lesbian clients. A second panel was selected for presentation at NCDA's 1995 San Francisco conference (Ford, 1996; Mobley & Slaney, 1996; Morrow, Gore, & Campbell, 1996). This second panel reported on research in progress as a result of the first panel's presentations. Ellis and Riggles (1996) edited a special issue of the *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services* on sexual identity on the job that also relied heavily on the articles from the 1994 NCDA panel. Chernin, Holden, and Chandler (1997) authored the lead article in a special section on assessment with lesbian women and gay men in the Association for Assessment in Counseling's journal, *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development* (Hansen, 1997). A gay male case study was included as part of a multicultural presentation at the American Counseling Association's annual convention on applying Donald Super's Career Development and Counseling model (Hartung et al., 1998). In Sanlo's (1998) book on working with lesbian and gay college students, two chapters were included to address the career development issues of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students (Taylor, Borland, & Vaughters, 1998; Worthington, McCrary, & Howard, 1998). Luzzo (2000) included a chapter on providing career counseling to gay and lesbian college students in his book on career counseling for college students published by the American Psychological Association (Pope, Prince, & Mitchell, 2000), and Perez, DeBord, and Bieschke (2000) also included a similar chapter in their handbook on counseling gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals (Croteau, Anderson, DiStefano, & Kampa-Kokesch, 2000). Further, dissertations (Adams, 1997; Button, 1996; Croghan, 2001; Ford, 1996; Keeton, 2002; Ormerod, 1996; Sardy, 2000; Shallenberger, 1998; Terndrup, 1998; Van Puymbroeck, 2002) were beginning to address this topic. These publications and conference proceedings provide strong evidence that the topic of gay and lesbian career development has now become part of the mainstream in career counseling. For the career counselor or vocational psychologist who is seeking practical advice on how to provide such career counseling services, there is now a growing body of literature to plumb for knowledge of how to intervene appropriately in the lives of lesbian and gay clients. The literature on the intersection of gay and lesbian culture with ethnicity and race has not expanded at that same pace.

Counselor Self-Preparation

The first step for counselors who want to work with gay and lesbian clients is to take a personal inventory of the ways that often subtle or unconscious biases may influence the counseling process (Bieschke & Matthews, 1996; Buhrke & Douce, 1991; Gelberg & Chojnacki, 1995; Prince, 1997a). Previous research studies have documented the mental health profession's poor treatment of all sexual minorities (Barret & Logan, 2001). Bias toward this oppressed minority will have an impact on interventions that the individual career counselor chooses to use (Belz, 1993; Brown, 1975; Chung & Harmon, 1994; Hetherington, Hillerbrand, & Etringer, 1989; Hetherington & Orzek, 1989; Morgan & Brown, 1991; Pope, 1992). For example, Pope (1992) used the example of how heterosexually oriented counselors may have the idea that if they can help a young man become more masculine in his behaviors, he can change his sexual orientation and

will not have to deal with all of the problems that being gay brings for him. Such counselors are simply trying to help, but these interventions are not research based, and although they may seem intuitively appropriate to some counselors, there is no research literature suggesting that (a) training in gender-appropriate behavior is a determinant of sexual orientation or (b) that a same-sex sexual orientation is subject to change anymore than an opposite-sex orientation (LeVay, 1996).

Living in communities that routinely discriminate against gay men and lesbian women makes it difficult if not virtually impossible to avoid internalizing negative stereotypes or attitudes about this sexual minority culture. Because misinformation or misunderstanding will quickly be evident to sexual minority clients, and may cause them to seek help elsewhere or not to get help at all, counselors must be familiar with gay and lesbian culture so they are credible and congruent in their attitudes (Pope, 1992, 1995c). Attending workshops, reading the literature, and participating in lesbian and gay culture are effective ways to acquire knowledge about gay men and lesbian women and their culture. Former clients and friends who are gay men or lesbian women are also invaluable sources of information.

In particular, career counselors who work with gay men and lesbian women must understand the process of developing a gay or lesbian cultural identity (Adams, 1997; Boatwright, Gilbert, Forrest, & Ketzenberger, 1996; Cass, 1979; Chung & Katayama, 1998; Croghan, 2001; Driscoll, Kelley, & Fassinger, 1996; Dunkle, 1996; Fassinger, 1991, 1996; Pope, 1995c, 1996). Morgan and Brown (1991) identified the process of cultural identity development as critical in the lives of lesbian women. These authors had reanalyzed data from two previously gathered large lesbian samples and concluded that the lesbian career development process seemed both similar to and different from previously published minority group models of career development. Because age cannot be a predictor of lesbian or gay identity development because individuals discover their sexual orientation at a variety of ages, career counselors need to be aware of their clients' stage of gay/lesbian identity development as well as their other development issues in order to provide effective career counseling. Further, issues of multiple identity and discrimination are complex and challenging. Martinez and Sullivan (1998) examined the complexity of gay identity development in African American gay men and lesbian women. They identified three specific issues as adding the most complexity and as differentiating their identity development from most gay or lesbian identity development models: racial prejudice, limited acceptance by the African American community, and a lack of integration into the larger White gay community. Van Puymbroeck (2002) found that the effects on career development of ethnic or sexual minority status are not simply additive but interactive and that gender plays a defining role.

Further, counselors who cannot be gay and lesbian affirmative in their attitudes are ethically required to refer the client to a career counselor who has experience with sexual minorities (Pope, 1995a; Pope et al., 2000; Pope & Tarvydas, 2002). The National Career Development Association (1994), American Counseling Association (1995), and American Psychological Association (2002) have well-defined ethical

codes that offer guidance for individuals who work with sexual orientation issues as well as career issues.

Client-Focused Interventions

From the earliest (Brown, 1975) to the most recent articles in this domain (Pope & Barret, 2002), the issue of coming out has been central for gay men and lesbian women who are seeking career counseling. Even if unstated, it is important for the counselor to recommend this topic for discussion as part of the career counseling process.

Issues to address in such a discussion include the how-tos (Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993; Pope & Schecter, 1992) and the whys associated with deciding to come out (Brown, 1975; Hetherington et al., 1989; Pope, 1995c). Professional counselors can help their clients consider the advantages and disadvantages of coming out in the workplace or school (Adams, 1997; Belz, 1993; Brown, 1975; Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993; Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989; Morgan & Brown, 1991; Morrow, 1997; Pope, Rodriguez, & Chang, 1992; Pope & Schecter, 1992; Savin-Williams, 1993). They can provide clients with opportunities for behavioral rehearsals that are directed toward developing and training strategies for informing others.

Furthermore, it is important for professional counselors to recognize that there are two different types of coming out (Pope, 1995a). On the one hand, coming out has been discussed as a developmental task for gay and lesbian individuals to complete successfully. This coming out involves a self-acceptance of the individual's own sexual orientation and might be better termed *coming out to self*. On the other hand, coming out has also been discussed as disclosing to others. Such disclosure might be accomplished by verbal or written, private or public statements to other individuals. By this action, individuals inform other persons of their sexual orientation. This might be better termed *coming out to others*. For many, the final step in this process is coming out in the workplace.

Anderson, Croteau, Chung, and DiStefano (2001) reported on the initial development of the Workplace Sexual Identity Management Measure (WSIMM). Psychometric properties of the WSIMM were examined for a sample of 172 student affairs professionals. The authors reported that the WSIMM successfully assessed a continuum of strategies for coming out in the workplace. Such measures as this are important to aid lesbian and gay workers in assessing their work environment and exploring appropriate strategies for sexual orientation disclosure.

For many sexual minorities, coming out is the most important event in their lives at that point in time and may be fraught with peril. Croghan (2001) discussed the special issues in coming out as a gay man and forming a strong cultural identity. Croghan found that the special characteristics in the development of a cultural identity as a gay man included being more aware of the acquisition of gay identity than male identity; having feelings leading to secrecy, withdrawal, self-loathing, and creation of false selves; and separating gay and nongay aspects of life in attempts to hide sexual orientation from others. These were precursors to the internal resolution and development of a healthy cultural identity as a gay man. Pope (1995a) and Gonsiorek (1993) identified some inherent problems

in delayed mastery of the developmental task of accepting one's sexual orientation (coming out to self) along with the concomitant development of appropriate dating and relationship strategies with same-sex partners. This may cause a "developmental domino effect," whereby the inadequate completion of a particular task causes the next important developmental task to be delayed, missed, or inadequately completed. These delayed or skipped developmental tasks may have long-term and pervasive effects for individuals who come out in their 30s, 40s, 50s, or even later.

Adams (1997) discussed how gay men's selection of jobs as flight attendants was a choice to integrate their cultural identity with their work identity. The participants in this study saw their movement into an occupation composed of a large group of gay men as extremely positive. They reported that three factors were most important for them: their hope of companionship with a large group of other gay men; an escape from family, a community, or a job that stifled being gay; and being safe. Adams found a positive relationship between working as a flight attendant and acculturation into the gay community, an increase in openness with others, and heightened self-esteem.

Special attention must also be paid to the issue of coming out in families from cultures that do not readily accept same-sex sexual orientations. "There is not much qualitative difference between Asian and United States cultures in terms of traditional attitudes toward homosexuality, but the intensity of heterosexism and homophobia is much stronger in Asian cultures than in U.S. culture" (Chung & Katayama, 1998, p. 22). The strategies that are used in more collectivist cultures (such as Asian) are different from those used in more individualist cultures (such as U.S.; Han, 2001; Pope, 1999; Pope, Cheng, & Leong, 1998; Pope & Chung, 2000; Pope et al., 1992). Newman and Muzzonigro (1993) studied differences between gay males in general who were raised in more traditional families and those raised in less traditional families. They reported that gay males from more traditional families felt more disapproval of their sexual orientation than gay males from less traditional families. Wooden, Kawasaki, and Mayeda (1983) addressed the issue of sexual identity development (coming out to self) in a sample of Japanese men and found that, although almost all of the sample had come out to their friends, only about half had disclosed their sexual orientation to their families. These issues must be addressed when providing career counseling to lesbian women or gay men from such cultures, and strategies must be revised accordingly. Other authors have similarly addressed these issues for African Americans (Maguen, Floyd, Bakeman, & Armistead, 2002; Martinez & Sullivan, 1998; McLean, Marini, & Pope, 2003), Hispanic Americans (Fimbres, 2001; Merighi & Grimes, 2000), and Native Americans (Morris & Rothblum, 1999; Piedmont, 1996).

Other career counseling recommendations that appear in the published literature include having the career counselor

1. Give information on how to go about coming out (Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993; Elliott, 1993; Pope & Schecter, 1992)
2. Train clients in asking and responding to informational interview and job interview questions like "Are you married?" and "How many children do you have?" (Hetherington & Orzek, 1989)

3. Offer special programming to meet the career development needs of lesbians and gays (D'Augelli, 1993; Evans & D'Augelli, 1996), including special programming on (a) résumé writing, such as directly addressing issues of how far out to be on the résumé or how many times the word *lesbian* is mentioned on a résumé page (research on lesbian issues, teaching lesbian topics; Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989), and (b) job interviewing (Hetherington et al., 1989)

What about the client who has not completed the coming out tasks and keeps his or her sexual orientation private? There is no guaranteed way that professional career counselors can elicit this information. There are, however, specifics that will help create a supportive atmosphere. Having gay and lesbian books, along with other professional literature, that address career development on the bookshelf will help some clients realize that counselors are prepared to work with sexual minorities (see Appendix). Placing gay and lesbian literature in the office waiting room will send a very overt signal that the counselor is gay and lesbian affirmative. Popular magazines such as *The Advocate*, *Curve*, *Genre*, *DIVA*, and *Out* send obvious signals to all clients and may help clients in general gain more information about gay and lesbian coworkers.

Discrimination against individuals on the basis of their race, ethnic origin, gender, disability, religion, political affiliation, or sexual orientation is a fact of life in U.S. society. Professional career counselors who fail to recognize this and do not assist their clients in coping with this reality do a disservice to their clients. Issues of dual and multiple discrimination must also be addressed when providing career counseling services. For example, lesbian women face at least two virulent forms of discrimination in U.S. society: sexism and heterosexism. If they are also a member of an ethnic or racial minority, older, or physically challenged, they may face daunting barriers to achieving their career goals. Openly addressing these issues and preparing clients to cope with the more overt manifestations of racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, and ageism are important and primary roles of the career counselor. As simple as it may seem, talking openly with clients about issues of employment discrimination is very important. Even if clients are not the first to broach the subject, the issues ought to be discussed so that the client is aware of the career counselor's sensitivity and knowledge in this area (Adams, 1997; Anastas, 1998; Brown, 1975; Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993; Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989; Keeton, 2002; Pope, 1991; Pope et al., 1992; Terndrup, 1998; Van Puymbroeck, 2002).

When these issues are openly and fully discussed, such discussions lead to improved decision making. Ford (1996) found that young lesbians in her sample sought jobs, communities, and employers in which they were less likely to experience discrimination and chose occupations in which they could disclose their sexual orientation. Terndrup (1998), in a study of gay male teachers, found that most of the participating teachers revealed their primary reliance on "implicitly out" identity management strategies to alleviate fears of discrimination, public accusation, job loss, and impaired credibility.

Other authors have begun to look at issues of coming out and discrimination through the lens of career development theory. Degges-White

and Shoffner (2002) used the Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) as a framework for identifying potential career challenges for lesbian women. They explored the relationship between "outness" and discrimination within the four primary components of TWA: skills, abilities, needs, and values. Mobley and Slaney (1996) looked at the relevance of Holland's theory for lesbian women and gay men. Morrow et al. (1996) looked at the application of a sociocognitive framework to the career development of lesbian women and gay men. Ford (1996) used Astin's (1984) model of career choice and work behavior to study the early occupational choices of young lesbian women. Shallenberger (1998) compared career concerns, role salience, and career change between heterosexual and lesbian women and between lesbian women in different stages of development using lesbian identity development theory and Savickas's refinement of Super's career development theory (Super, Savickas, & Super, 1996).

Discrimination is but one barrier to getting and keeping a job. The full discussion of such barriers is critical to successful career counseling with gay men and lesbian women. Keeton (2002) found both lesbian and gay male participants listed sexual orientation discrimination among the top three most anticipated career-related barriers and expected a moderately high degree of hindrance if encountered. There were, however, important gender differences in three areas: anticipation of sex discrimination, anticipation of conflict between children and career demands, and anticipation of being discouraged from choosing nontraditional careers. Van Puymbroeck (2002) found that the effects on career development of ethnic or sexual minority status are not simply additive but interactive and that gender plays a defining role.

Another important intervention is providing couples counseling with dual-career couples or discordant couples (one member of the couple is openly lesbian or gay whereas the other does not openly disclose sexual orientation). It is important to work with both individuals in a relationship on dual-career couple issues (Belz, 1993; Eldridge, 1987; Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989; Morgan & Brown, 1991; Orzek, 1992). The issues are important ones for the male couple or female couple with no experience and only few dual-career-couple role models who are out. Two other special issues identified in the literature involved differences in socioeconomic status between the partners and spouse relocation.

Hetherington et al. (1989) highlighted the issues facing dual-career couples: how to present the relationship, how to introduce one's partner, whether to openly acknowledge the love relationship, and how to deal with social events. Belz (1993) discussed dual-career couple issues as well, including geographic location, lifestyle that one partner wants to maintain while employed, problems that one partner's job may cause for a partner who may not want to be as open about this orientation, when to tell people at work, and how to handle situations that may arise at work in which the partner must be involved.

Another aspect of providing career counseling to lesbian women and gay men is the special procedures that have been recommended for using psychological tests with them (Belz, 1993; Chung & Harmon, 1994; Mobley & Slaney, 1996; Pope, 1992; Pope et al., 1992; Prince, 1997a, 1997b). Professional counselors need to know what special procedures are required to obtain accurate results or to make accurate interpreta-

tions. Because the use of career interest inventories, other personality tests, and card sorts are all important interventions in the repertoire of career counselors, how these items are used with lesbian women and gay men is becoming an important issue. Pope (1992) identified and analyzed the use and misuse of specific subscales on five major psychological inventories used in career counseling and personnel selection (Strong Interest Inventory, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, California Psychological Inventory, and Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory). Using a case study methodology, Pope (1992) wove into the cases technical and psychometric data to illustrate how psychological tests have been misused with gay and lesbian clients. He identified the following issues: fear of identification/exposure of sexual orientation especially in the highly sensitive personnel selection area, bias and prejudice (heterosexism) of the counselor, appropriate interpretation based on identification of client response set, issues of sex role and sexual orientation stereotyping (male feeling types and female thinking types), and generally the appropriate interpretation of psychological tests with a gay male or lesbian client.

Other research on the use of psychological assessment with gay men and lesbian women has included Belz (1993), Chung and Harmon (1994), and Mobley and Slaney (1996). Belz identified special assessment procedures to be used with gay and lesbian clients, such as making new cards in a values card sort, for example, "being out on the job." Chung and Harmon used the Self-Directed Search (SDS; Holland, 1995) and compared gay and heterosexual men of equivalent age, socioeconomic background, ethnicity, student status, and education and reported that gay men scored higher on Artistic and Social scales of the SDS and lower on the Realistic and Investigative scales. They concluded that gay men's aspirations were less traditional for men, yet their aspirations were not lower in status than those of the heterosexual men. Mobley and Slaney found that the identity development stage of the client is important when interpreting results of career assessment instruments.

Other special career counseling interventions such as bibliotherapy (Belz, 1993; Brown, 1975; Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993) and cross-cultural career counseling with gay men of color (Chung & Katayama, 1998; Pope et al., 1992) have also been identified in the literature. These recommended special counseling interventions included bibliotherapy, in which gay and lesbian clients read biographies and autobiographies of lesbian women or gay men who did not conceal their sexual orientation from others and society (Belz, 1993; Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993), and distribution of a bibliography containing factual references on gay/lesbian issues such as the references on the etiology of sexual orientation (Brown, 1975; LeVay, 1996). Belz and Croteau and Hedstrom suggested that role models of an integrated and open sexual orientation for gay men and lesbian women were useful to clients in enhancing their options and educating them about living a positive, mentally healthy, and well-integrated life. Other career counseling interventions that have been recommended in the published literature include that gay men of color have special issues such as multiple identities and special oppression (Pope & Chung, 2000; Pope et al., 1992; Van Puymbroeck, 2002). Career counselors must develop with their clients special interventions that take into account these important cultural issues, such as coming out to family, col-

lectivist versus individual decision making, and other issues that are culture specific (Chung & Katayama, 1998; Pope, 1999).

Helping clients overcome internalized negative stereotypes is another task of the career counselor (Chung & Harmon, 1994; Ford, 1996; Hetherington & Orzek, 1989; Morgan & Brown, 1991; Pope et al., 1992). Pope (1995a) reported that it is important for the professional career counselor to understand the concept of internalized homophobia for gay and lesbian clients because this may affect the client's life and occupational choices. Oppression oppresses even the mentally healthy and well-adjusted people in cultural minorities. Societal messages repeated over and over again about evil, sick, and sinful people may be believed and accepted at some conscious or unconscious level, and these messages permeate the U.S. dominant culture. Internalized homophobia, when it occurs, cannot be overcome easily. It is important that career counselors understand and appreciate the effect that these messages can and do have on their gay and lesbian clients as well as on all cultural minorities in the United States. When the client is a sexual minority, a gender minority, and a racial or ethnic minority, these issues are intensified (Chung & Katayama, 1998; Keeton, 2002; Pope & Chung, 2000). Culturally appropriate self-esteem interventions (e.g., positive self-talk, reframing, forgivenesses) can be used here to overcome these internalized negative stereotypes.

Program-Focused Interventions

Program-focused interventions include interventions that are programmatic in scope and can be implemented in an agency or institution. All of the recommended interventions in this area have one commonality: Each tries to create more options for the gay man or lesbian woman making a career decision. Even with lesbian and gay male clients who need more focus in their decision making, the procedures identified here are important ones to precede the decision-making stage of career counseling because they may suggest options that the client may not have explored. The interventions recommended here for career counseling include the following:

- Supporting and encouraging gay and lesbian professionals as role models for students (Chung & Harmon, 1994; Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989; Morgan & Brown, 1991)
- Providing information on national lesbian and gay networks of professionals and community people such as the Association for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Issues in Counseling (gay/lesbian/bisexual counselors in the American Counseling Association) and the Golden Gate Business Association (gay/lesbian Chamber of Commerce in San Francisco; Belz, 1993; Elliott, 1993; Hetherington & Orzek, 1989)
- Sharing information on existing local gay and lesbian community resources (Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989; Morgan & Brown, 1991)
- Offering special programming such as talks by lesbian and gay professionals (Hetherington et al., 1989)
- Arranging career shadowing opportunities with other gay and lesbian professionals (Belz, 1993)
- Facilitating externships or cooperative education placements in gay/lesbian owned or operated businesses (Hetherington et al., 1989)
- Establishing mentoring programs (Elliott, 1993)

Other recommendations include having the career counselor publish a list of gay and lesbian individuals who are out and who would be available for informational interviews with clients (Belz, 1993; Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989) and offering special programming to meet the career development needs of lesbian women and gay men, such as special programming on (a) job fairs (Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989) and (b) support groups (Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989).

Occupational role model and networking interventions are very important for special populations who have historically been limited in their occupational choices by some type of societal stereotyping (Adams, 1997; Brown, 1975; Hetherington & Orzek, 1989). Gay men have been stereotyped as hairdressers, florists, dancers, actors, secretaries, nurses, flight attendants, and other occupations traditionally held by women. Lesbian women have been stereotyped as truck drivers, athletes, mechanics, and other occupations traditionally held by men. These very narrow stereotypes serve as safe occupations, in which lesbian and gay people may feel more accepted, more able to truly be themselves. However, these occupations can also limit the occupational choices of gay and lesbian individuals who are coming out to self and beginning to make choices based on a changing identity. Nevertheless, for some individuals, they are seen as the only possible choices.

In one of the most recent investigations, Nauta, Saucier, and Woodard (2001) looked at differences in the interpersonal influences, especially the importance of role models, on career decision making between gay, lesbian, and bisexual (GLB) students and heterosexually oriented college students. They found that GLB students reported having more career role models than did heterosexually oriented students and that the amount of inspiration received from role models did not differ between the two groups. GLB students, however, also reported that they received less support and guidance from others in their academic and career decision-making process and that they attached special importance to having the career role model's sexual orientation be the same as their own and having the support of people with their own sexual orientation.

Once lesbian or gay individuals have found a job, then they must keep it. Kirby (2002) reported on programmatic interventions in the workplace that could be implemented to assist gay and lesbian workers. Such interventions included mentoring programs; diversity workshops; and gay, lesbian, and bisexual affirmative policies such as nondiscrimination policies and domestic partner benefits.

Advocacy or Social Action Interventions

Advocacy or social action interventions include interventions that are focused on the external, social environment of the client (Herr & Niles, 1998; Morrow et al., 1996; Pope, 1995a). Positive social advocacy for gay and lesbian clients could include lobbying for the inclusion of sexual orientation in the nondiscrimination policies of local employers or picketing a speech made by an ex-gay who claims to have become a happy, fully functioning heterosexual. Some lesbian and gay male clients will need basic information on the gay and lesbian community as well as the facts on sexual orientation discrimination.

Such interventions could include counselors knowing and providing information to clients on the geographic location and the size of the gay and lesbian communities in their area (Belz, 1993; Elliott, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989), information on the employment policies and equal employment opportunity statements of local businesses (Elliott, 1993), information on local and federal antidiscrimination laws (Morgan & Brown, 1991), assistance on clients' avoiding arrest (Brown, 1975), and assistance to clients about constructing affirming work environments (Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993). Another important workplace intervention could be working to change employer-related statements or policies that discriminate (Button, 1996). Such interventions are also important for use in providing career counseling with racial and ethnic minorities (Bowman, 1993; Fimbres, 2001; Han, 2001; Martinez & Sullivan, 1998; McLean et al., 2003; Pope, 1999; Pope et al., 1998).

Career counselors working with this special population must be gay and lesbian affirmative as well as go beyond the "do no harm" admonition to encompass a positive advocacy for gay and lesbian clients and their rights (Belz, 1993; Brown, 1975; Croteau & Hedstrom, 1993; Hetherington et al., 1989; Hetherington & Orzek, 1989; Pope & Barret, 2002). Examples of such a positive advocacy include working to change employer-related statements or policies that discriminate (Button, 1996), working toward changing the laws that criminalize certain sexual acts between two consenting adults, changing housing laws that do not allow two unrelated persons to live together, or working to stop police entrapment (Brown, 1975; Pope & Schecter, 1992). Such laws are often used to prevent lesbian and gay couples and their children from renting a house or apartment or to deny employment to teachers, counselors, police officers, and other professionals.

Even if some laws are rescinded, people who have had such laws used against them are subject to continued problems because certain kinds of violations may remain on computerized police records for years. A gay or lesbian professional who faces a background investigation as a routine part of employment may freeze because of fear that exposure of such a police record will lead to renewed public humiliation. Clients may decide to take the risk that previous histories may not be discovered or to not continue to pursue a particular job. Whatever the course of action selected, the career counselor can expect the client to experience significant anxiety and anger that this injustice may continue to be a limitation. Although not routine, situations like this may lead some clients to choose to remain in unsatisfying or limited careers. Counselors have an opportunity to lobby law enforcement officials to stop entrapments as well as the unequal enforcement of laws. Such issues as these are also especially relevant for ethnic and racial minorities. Career counselors must take an active, advocacy approach to working with lesbian or gay clients as well as to working with all cultural minorities (Bowman, 1993; Fimbres, 2001; Han, 2001; Martinez & Sullivan, 1998; McLean et al., 2003; Morrow et al., 1996; Pope, 1999; Pope et al., 1998).

Summary

In this article, we have recommended specific interventions directed at counselors themselves, at individual counseling activities, at career coun-

selling programs within institutions, and at advocacy or social/community action. Those interventions aimed at counselors themselves or the type of activities used with gay and lesbian career counseling clients must either be learned during graduate school education or through continuing professional development at conferences or workshops. Interventions directed at institutions or programs and at social/community action have implications for school-based career education programs, career planning texts used in colleges and universities, and occupational information.

Phillips et al. (1983) discussed exploratory research and limited samples as part of the initial stages in the development of a specialized field of study. As gay and lesbian career research is beginning to move from its infancy, it is important for researchers to begin to develop more empirically based research models and to gather data on racially and ethnically diverse sexual minority populations. Specific recommendations regarding this research have been outlined previously (Pope, 1995a). Emerging areas of study in gay and lesbian career development are the interplay of race, ethnicity, and other cultural issues with the gay and lesbian cultural issues as well as the related issue of multiple discrimination and its effect on the career development of the individual. Further, the Association for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues in Counseling (a division of the American Counseling Association) has promulgated the general competencies that counseling professionals must have in providing services to sexual minorities (Terndrup, Ritter, Barret, Logan, & Mate, 1997).

Finally, the issue of career counseling with gay male and lesbian adolescents is an important one for researchers to begin to study. Only recently have researchers in the sexual minorities field of study begun to even look at gay and lesbian adolescents as well as at adolescents in general. In the career development arena, Morrow (1997), Pope (2002), and Chung and Katayama (1998) have opened the door on a discussion of providing career counseling for these young people, but there is much more to be done here.

Providing effective and culturally appropriate career counseling services for lesbian and gay clients is not an easy task. It is fraught with personal and social issues, including internalized homophobia, employment discrimination, and much more. Career counselors who directly addresses these issues will find the path smoother and rewards greater for their clients who are seeking help with their career decisions.

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Appendix

Popular Career Books for Gay Men and Lesbians

- Becmyr, B., & Steinman, E. (Eds.). (2003). *Bisexual men in culture and society*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Besner, H. F., & Spungin, C. I. (1995). *Gay & lesbian students: Understanding their needs*. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.
- Comstock, G. D. (2000). *The work of a gay college chaplain*. New York: Harrington Park Press.

- Coville, B. (Ed.). (1995). *Am I blue? Coming out from the silence*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Davis, N. D., Cole, E., & Rothblum, E. D. (Eds.). (1996). *Lesbian therapists and their therapy: From both sides of the couch*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- DeCrescenzo, T. (Ed.). (1994). *Helping gay and lesbian youth: New policies, new programs, new practices*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- DeCrescenzo, T. (Ed.). (1997). *Gay and lesbian professionals in the closet: Who's in, who's out, and why*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Diamant, L. (Ed.). (1993). *Homosexual issues in the workplace*. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.
- Ellis, A. L., & Riggle, E. D. (Eds.). (1996). *Sexual identity on the job: Issues and services*. New York: Haworth.
- Harbeck, K. M. (Ed.). (1992). *Coming out of the classroom closet: Gay and lesbian students, teachers, and curricula*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Gelberg, S., & Chojnacki, J. T. (1996). *Career and life planning with gay, lesbian, and bisexual persons*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Jennings, K. (1994). *Becoming visible: A reader in gay and lesbian history for high school and college students*. Boston: Alyson.
- Jennings, K. (1994). *One teacher in ten*. Boston: Alyson.
- Katz, J. (1976). *Gay American history*. New York: Crowell.
- Lingiardi, V., & Drescher, J. (Eds.). (2003). *The mental health professions and homosexuality: International perspectives*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- McNaught, B. (1993). *Gay issues in the workplace*. New York: St. Martins.
- Miller, G. V. (1995). *The gay male's odyssey in the corporate world: From disempowerment to empowerment*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Murphy, L. R. (1988). *Perverts by official order: The campaign against homosexuals by the United States Navy*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Rasi, R. A., & Rodriguez-Nogues, L. (1995). *Out in the workplace: The pleasures and perils of coming out on the job*. Los Angeles: Alyson.
- Scarce, M. (1999). *Smearing the queer: Medical bias in the health care of gay men*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Shawver, L. (1994). *And the flag was still there: Straight people, gay people, and sexuality in the U.S. military*. New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Winfield, L. (2000). *Straight talk about gays in the workplace* (2nd ed.). New York: Harrington Park Press.
- Yeager, K. E. (1999). *Trailblazers: Profiles of America's gay and lesbian elected officials*. New York: Harrington Park Press.

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